

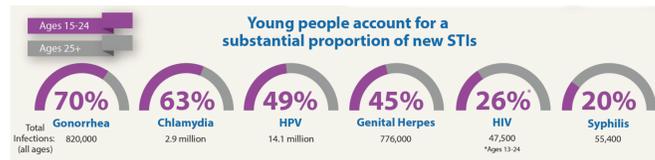
# Adolescents & Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <sup>2</sup> Oklahoma State Department of Health <sup>3</sup> Oklahoma Youth Risk Behaviors Survey 2015

## STI Background

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) affect people of all ages. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that youth ages 15-24 make up just over one quarter of sexually active people in the United States (U.S.), but account for half of new STI cases each year.<sup>1</sup>

There are other factors that put someone at greater risk of getting an STI than just age. Higher STI rates are more common among men who have sex with men (MSMs), racial minorities (particularly Black/African Americans and Hispanics), and injection drug users (IDUs).



Common STIs include Chlamydia, Genital Herpes (HSV), Gonorrhea, Hepatitis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), Syphilis, and Trichomoniasis. The two most commonly reported STIs in the U.S. and Oklahoma (OK) are Chlamydia and Gonorrhea.<sup>1</sup> Youth in particular account for a majority of these cases each and every year.

## Youth Risk Behavior Survey

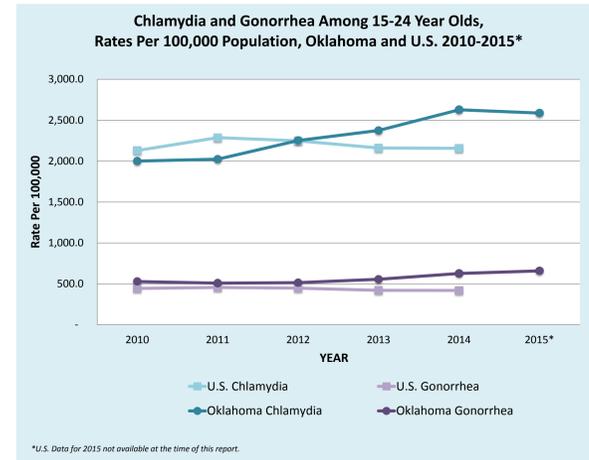
The Oklahoma Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) of 2015 shows that among our public school students:

- 44% ever had sex<sup>3</sup>
- 31% were sexually active (during the 3 months before the survey)<sup>3</sup>
- 40% did not use a condom at last sex (among those that were sexually active)<sup>3</sup>

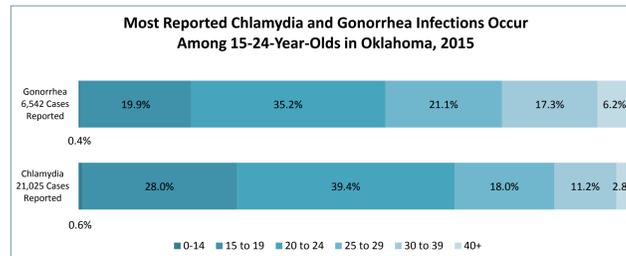
The YRBS also indicates 42% of schools provide referrals to students for HIV/STI testing, and only 33% provide referrals for the provision of condoms.<sup>3</sup>

While 47% of schools provided parents and families with information about how to monitor their child, only 18% gave information on how to communicate about sex.<sup>3</sup>

## Chlamydia and Gonorrhea



For age group 15-24 year olds, the Chlamydia and Gonorrhea rates in the U.S. have stayed fairly steady, increasing only 1.3% for Chlamydia and decreasing 5.3% for Gonorrhea from 2010 to 2014.<sup>1</sup> However, both Chlamydia and Gonorrhea rates in OK have increased from 2010 to 2014; The Chlamydia rate increased by 31.1% and Gonorrhea rate by 18.8%.<sup>2</sup>



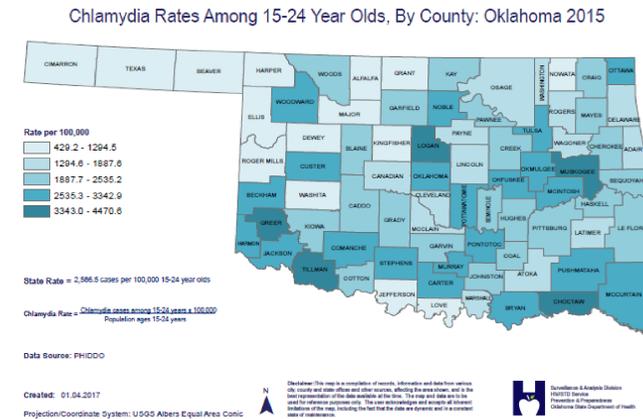
In 2015, youth ages 15-24 accounted for 67% of Chlamydia cases and 55% of Gonorrhea cases.<sup>2</sup>

### Facts about Chlamydia and Gonorrhea:

- Can get it from unprotected vaginal, anal, or oral sex
- Can be passed on to infants during childbirth
- Most cases are asymptomatic (no sign of infection)
- Can cause abnormal discharge and/or painful urination
- Infection can be cured/treated with antibiotics\*
- Complications occur when left untreated, and the damage is often irreversible
- Primary causes of Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID) which can result in ectopic pregnancy, chronic pain, cervicitis, and/or infertility.

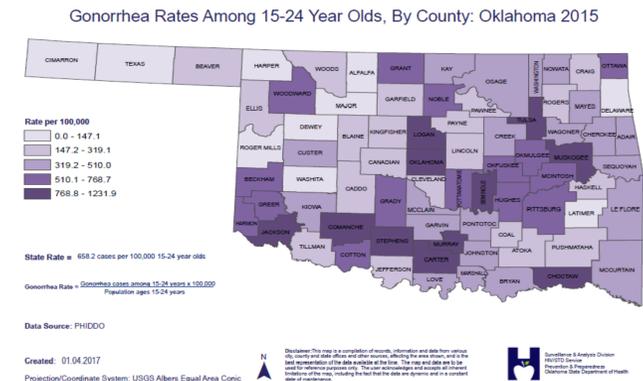
Chlamydia is the #1 reported STD in OK<sup>2</sup>

- OK ranked 10<sup>th</sup> (highest) in U.S. for Chlamydia in 2015
- 21,025 new cases in 2015
- 67% of cases among 15-24 year olds
- "Silent Disease" that can lead to long-term complications



Gonorrhea is the #2 reported STD in OK<sup>2</sup>

- OK ranked 5<sup>th</sup> (highest) in U.S. for Gonorrhea in 2015
- 6,542 new cases in 2015
- 55% of cases among 15-24 year olds
- Growing resistance to antibiotic treatment\*



The 20-24 age group has the highest rate of Chlamydia and Gonorrhea than any other age group. If left untreated they can cause serious and permanent health problems.

Women need to be especially concerned as these STIs can cause damage to their reproductive system, making it difficult or impossible to get pregnant later on. The CDC reports that undiagnosed STIs cause 24,000 women in the U.S. to become infertile each year.<sup>1</sup>

## Risk Reduction Strategies

- ✓ Abstinence—from vaginal, anal, and oral sex, genital contact, and injection drug use (IDU)
- ✓ Mutual Monogamy—sex only between two STD-free individuals/partners
- ✓ Protected Sex—correct and consistent condom or barrier use (includes male condoms, female condoms, and dental dams)
- ✓ Fewer number of sexual partners—limits exposure
- ✓ Regular HIV/STI Testing—at least once a year if sexually active (every 3 months if at higher risk)
- ✓ HPV vaccine—recommended for everyone age 9-26
- ✓ PrEP—pre-exposure prophylaxis taken once daily to prevent HIV transmission for those at high risk

## Conclusion

Oklahoma ranks among the top ten states for highest Chlamydia and Gonorrhea rates. Both of these STIs are most common among youth ages 15-24 years. Unfortunately, they are not the only two STIs to be concerned about. It is estimated that 80% of sexually active people have some strain of HPV. This virus (as well as HSV) is very contagious since it can be spread through skin-to-skin contact, not just unprotected sex.<sup>1</sup>

Not all STIs are curable, but there are treatment options available to help. The CDC recommends everyone who is sexually active should get tested at least once a year. Once diagnosed, treatment can help cure or minimize the infection and prevent further transmission to others.

The HIV/STD Service of the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) offers training for HIV/STI testing and education. OSDH Maternal and Child Health Services offers age-appropriate evidence-based prevention curricula and training in positive youth development.

